



THE DOCTOR

MEDICAL

# NEWS-PAPER;

OR,



THE PHYSICIAN.

AND

EDITED BY ELIAS SMITH, PHYSICIAN, No. 56, MIDDLE-STREET.

*The Lord hath created Medicines out of the Earth:—With such doth he heal Men, and taketh away their PAINS.*—ECCLES. xxxviii. 4, 7.

Vol. I.

BOSTON, TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 1822.

No. 14

## HISTORY OF MEDICINE—No. V.

Hippocrates also drew signs from all excrements, whatever they are, that are separated from the body of man. His most remarkable prognostics, however, are from the urine. The patient's urine, in his opinion, is best when the sediment is white, soft to the touch, and of an equal consistence. If it continue so during the course of the distemper, and till the time of the crisis, the patient is in no danger, and will soon be well. This is what Hippocrates called *concocted urine*, or what denotes the concoction of the humours; and he observed that this concoction of the urine seldom appeared thoroughly, but on the days of the crisis which happily put an end to the distemper. "We ought (said Hippocrates) to compare the urine with the purulent matter which runs from ulcers. As the pus, which is white, and of the same quality with the sediment of the urine we are now speaking of, is a sign that the ulcer is on the point of closing; so that which is clear, and of another colour than white, and of an ill smell, is a sign that the ulcer is virulent, and in the same manner difficult to be cured: the urines that are like this we have described are only those which may be named good; all the rest are ill, and differ from one another only in the degrees of more or less. The first never appear but when nature has overcome the disease; and are a sign of the concoction of humours, without which you cannot hope for a certain cure. On the contrary, the last are made as long as the crudity remains, and the humours continue unconcocted. Among the urines of this last sort, the best are reddish, with a sediment that is soft, and of an equal consistence; which denotes, that the disease will be somewhat tedious, but without danger. The worst are those which are very red, and at the same time clear and without sediment; or that are

muddy and troubled in the making. In urine there is often a sort of cloud hanging in the vessel in which it is received; the higher this rises, or the farther distant it is from the bottom, or the more different from the colour of the laudable sediment above mentioned, the more there is of crudity. That which is yellow, or of a sandy colour, denotes abundance of bile; that which is black is the worst, especially if it has an ill smell, and is either altogether muddy or altogether clear. That whose sediment is like large ground wheat, or little flakes or scales spread one upon another, or bran, presages ill, especially the last. The fat or oil that sometimes swims upon the top of the urine, and appears in a form something like a spider's web, is a sign of a consumption of the flesh and solid parts. The making of a great quantity of urine is the sign of a crisis and sometimes the quality of it shows how the bladder is affected. We must also observe, that Hippocrates compared the state of the tongue with the urine; that is to say, when the tongue was yellow, and charged with bile, the urine he knew must of course be of the same colour; and when the tongue was red and moist, the urine was of its natural colour.

His prognostics from the excretions by stool are as follow. Those that are soft, yellowish, of some consistence, and not of an extraordinary ill smell, that answer to the quantity of what is taken inwardly, and that are voided at the usual hours, are the best of all. They ought also to be of a thicker consistence when the distemper is near the crisis; and it ought to be taken for a good prognostic, when some worms, round and long, are evacuated at the same time with them. The prognosis, however, may still be favourable, though the matter excreted be thin and liquid, provided it make not too much noise in coming out, and the evacuation be not in a small quantity nor

too often; nor in so great abundance, nor so often, as to make the patient faint. All matter that is watery, white, of a pale green, or red, or frothy and viscous, is bad. That which is blackish, or of a livid hue, is the most pernicious. That which is pure black, and nothing else but a discharge of black bile, always prognosticates very ill; this humour, from what part soever it comes, showing the ill disposition of the intestines. The matter that is of several different colours, denotes the length of the distemper; and at the same time, that it may be of dangerous consequence.—Hippocrates places in the same class the matter that is bilious or yellow, and mixed with blood, or green and black, or like the dregs or scrapings of the guts. The stool that consists of pure bile, or entirely of phlegm, he also looks upon to be very bad.

Matter cast up by vomiting ought to be mixed with bile and phlegm; where one of those humours only is observed, it is worse. That which is black, livid, green, or of the colour of a leek, indicates alarming consequences.—The same is to be said of that which smells very ill; and if at the same time it be livid, death is not far off. The vomiting of blood is very often mortal.

The spittings which give ease in diseases of the lungs and in pleurisies, are those that come up readily and without difficulty; and it is good if they be mixed at the beginning with much yellow; but if they appear of the same colour, or are red, a great while after the beginning of the distemper, are salt and acrimonious, and cause violent coughings, they are not good. Spittings purely yellow are bad; and those that are white, viscous, and frothy give no ease. Whiteness is a good sign of concoction in regard to spittings; but they ought not at all to be viscous, nor too thick, nor too clear. We may make the same judgment of

the excrements of the nose according to their concoction and crudity. Spittings that are black, green, and red, are of very bad consequence. In inflammations of the lungs, those that are mixed with bile and blood presage well if they appear at the beginning, but are bad if they arise not about the seventh day.—But the worst sign in these distempers is, when there is no expectoration at all, and the too great quantity of matter that is ready to be discharged this way makes a rattling in the breast. After spitting of blood, the discharge of purulent matter often follows, which brings on a consumption, and at last death.

A kind good sweat is that which arises on the day of the crisis, and is discharged in abundance all over the body, and at the same time from all parts of the body, and thus carries off the fever: A cold sweat is alarming, especially in acute fevers, for in others it is only a sign of long continuance. When the patient sweats no where but on the head and neck, it is a sign that the disease will be long and dangerous. A gentle sweat in some particular part, of the head and breast, for instance, gives no relief, but denotes the seat of the distemper, or the weakness of the part. This kind of sweat was called by Hippocrates *epidrosis*.

The Hypochondria, or the abdomen in general, ought always to be soft and even, as well on the right side as on the left. When there is any hardness or unevenness in those parts, or heat and swellings, or when the patient cannot endure to have it touched, it is a sign the intestines are indisposed.

Hippocrates also inquired into the state of the pulse, or the beating of the arteries. The most ancient physicians, however, and even Hippocrates himself, for a long time, by this word understood the violent pulsation that is felt in an inflamed part, without putting the fingers to it. It is observed by Galen, and other physicians, that Hippocrates touches on the subject of the pulse more slightly than any other on which he treats. But that our celebrated physician understood something even on this subject, is easily gathered from several passages in his writings; as when he observes, that in acute fevers the pulse is very quick and very great; and when he makes mention, in the same place, of trembling pulses, and those that beat slowly; when he observes, that in some diseases incident to women, when the pulse strikes the finger faintly, and in a languishing manner, it is a sign of approaching death. He remarks also, in the *Couca Prenotiones*, that he whose vein, that is to say whose artery of the elbow, beats, is just going to run mad, or else that the person is at that time very much under the influence of anger.

#### REMARKS ON MEDICINE—NO. IV.

We are sorry indeed to observe, that Medicine has hitherto hardly been considered a

popular science, but as a branch of knowledge, solely confined to a particular set of men, while all the rest have been taught not only to neglect, but even to dread and despise it.

It will, however, appear, upon a more strict examination, that no science better deserves their attention, or is more capable of being rendered generally useful.

People are told that if they dip the least into medical knowledge, it will render them fanciful, and make them believe they have got every disease of which they read. This, I am satisfied, will seldom be the case with sensible people; and, suppose it were, they must soon be undeceived. A short time will shew them their error, and a little more reading will infallibly correct it. A single instance will shew the absurdity of this notion. A sensible lady rather than read a medical performance, which would instruct her in the management of her children, must leave them entirely to the care and conduct of the most ignorant, credulous, and superstitious part of the human species.

Indeed, no part of medicine is of more general importance than that which relates to the nursing and management of children. Yet few parents pay a proper attention to it.—They leave the sole care of their tender offspring, at the very time when care and attention are most necessary, to hirelings, who are either too careless to do their duty, or too ignorant to know it. We will venture to affirm, that more human lives are lost by the carelessness and inattention of parents and nurse, than are saved by the Faculty; and that the joint and well-conducted endeavours, both of private persons and the public, for the preservation of infant lives, would be of more advantage to society than the whole art of Medicine, upon its present footing.

The benefits of Medicine, as a trade, will ever be confined to those who are able to pay for them; and of course the far greater part of mankind will be every where deprived of them. Physicians, like other people, must live by their employment, and the poor must either want advice altogether, or take up with that which is worse than none. There are not however any where wanting well-disposed people, of better sense, who are willing to supply the defect of medical advice to the poor, did not their fear of doing ill often suppress their inclination to do good. Such people are often deterred from the most noble and praise-worthy actions, by the foolish alarms sounded in their ears by a set of men, who to raise their own importance magnify the difficulties of doing good, find fault with what is truly commendable, and flee at every attempt to relieve the sick which is not conducted by the precise rules of medicine. These gentlemen must, however, excuse me for saying, that I have often known such well-disposed persons do much good; and that their practice,

which is generally the result of good sense and observation, assisted by a little medical reading, is frequently more rational than that of the ignorant retainer to physic, who despises both reason and observation, *that he may go wrong by rule*; and who, while he is dosing his patient with medicines, often neglects other things of far greater importance.

BUCHAN.

COMMUNICATED.

[From a Philadelphia Paper]

#### Cure for the Bite of a Snake.

MR. POULSON—Having read in your paper of yesterday an account of a boy bitten by a Pilot or Copperhead Snake, and the means used for his cure, I am induced to send you the case of a man bitten by a Rattle Snake.

A few years since I employed Benjamin Homan to build a Saw Mill on the waters of the Delaware, in the state of New York; this man was one day sitting on a stick of timber and carelessly swinging his naked foot, when he felt something strike it; on looking down he observed a large Rattle Snake which instantly escaped into the brook. Homan attempted to get to the house, (about 250 yards distant) but was so overcome with pain he could not reach it; his cries brought the workmen to his assistance. He had very severe spasms, at short intervals, and which he said "struck him from his foot to his heart and would take his life"; the spasms increased in strength and frequency, with scarcely half a minute's intermission, and he exclaimed, "he should never get out of the woods alive." There was no Physician in the neighborhood. I providentially remembered an account I had seen in an English publication of two Viper catchers (a man and his wife) who suffered themselves to be bitten by Vipers to obtain the reward offered for a remedy against the bite of those Snakes; these people cured themselves and obtained the reward. The remedy was *Sweet Oil* taken internally.

As Oil was not to be had, I substituted melted Hog's Lard and gave two-thirds of a common tea cup full every five minutes; the effect was immediately apparent; the spasms became less violent, decreased in frequency, and within half an hour ceased entirely.

The external applications were scarifying the part bitten, binding ligatures of white ash bark above the ankle and under the knee, and placing the foot in mud



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The foot was much swelled, but the swelling did not reach above the ligature at the ankle—it afterwards turned dark with greenish streaks, and continued somewhat inflamed and painful; but these unfavorable circumstances were afterwards removed by applying a *Chicken newly killed* to the foot. It was several days after the bite before the chicken was applied.

From the above cases of the Viper catchers, of Benjamin Homan, and of the Boy mentioned in your paper of yesterday, may we not conclude, that *drinking SWEET OIL OF MELTED HOGS LARD, and applying the warm flesh of a Chicken to the part bitten, will prevent the fatal effects frequently produced by the bite of venomous Snakes.*—These remedies are simple, can have no injurious effects, and are generally at hand.

WM. A. STOKES,

Sept. 3, 1818.

Northern Liberties.

### Sting of the Spider.

There is doubtless something very poisonous in the sting of a spider. It is said the toad is poisoned by it, and that they bite a plantain leaf, and find a cure. It is recorded in a Virginia paper, that a man was bitten above the knee by a spider. A few minutes after, he perceived a pain shooting upwards from the spot, which soon reached his heart. A quantity of plantain was immediately gathered and bruised, and the juice squeezed out and swallowed, which stopped the progress of the poison, so that a cure of the bite or sting was obtained immediately. This is a simple medicine, and is worth trying in such a case. Not long ago, a man in Salem was stung or bitten by a spider in his eye lid. It swelled very much. The doctor ordered it bathed with sugar of lead, (a poison.) This caused it to swell more, or it swelled more after it was put on. The swelling increased and extended downwards. Had the poison been driven from the body by raising the heat in the man, by which the poison would have been driven out, there is no doubt in my mind but it would have effected a cure.

### Poison Mackerel.

It is said that some of these fish are poisonous. Some say it is caused by feeding on copper banks. Whatever may be the cause, it is evident that not a few people have been injured by eating them. Several instances have of

late been mentioned, of families who have eaten fresh mackerel and been taken sick, became spotted, resembling the color of this kind of fish.

A circumstance has occurred in my family of late which confirms the above accounts of the bad effects of fresh mackerel. On Wednesday morning, 25th ult. my wife bought a fresh mackerel and broiled it for breakfast. Five out of nine ate of it. Soon after, they were taken sick, and the sickness increased. Four of them took a little medicine, which relieved them for a while. My wife concluded not to take any thing until she could ascertain the cause. In the afternoon she was so sick as to be unable to walk, and was obliged to go to bed, and take the vegetable emetic. This in a few hours completely removed the poison, and the next day she was entirely well.

At half past nine in the evening another was taken with pain and vomiting.—The same course was taken, and by 11 o'clock she was entirely well. Two more were treated in the same manner the next morning, and were restored to their usual health. The fifth recovered without the emetic, having eaten but little of the fish. Should others experience the same effects, they may rest assured, that this course with the vegetable medicine is an infallible cure.—*Editor.*

SODA. [From Thatcher's Dispens. p. 40.]

"Soda, or mineral alkali as it has been denominated, in contradistinction to the other alkalies, which have been distinguished by the epithet of vegetable, exists in a constituent principle of several saline mineral substances, but it is usually extracted from the combustion of marine plants. It is afforded by the combustion, combined with carbonic acid, and associated with various other saline substances, and is obtained pure by the same general process as that applied to potash."

From the above it is evident that soda is a mineral, and of course contrary to man, who is composed of vegetables. It has long been settled in my mind, that minerals are unhealthy, and injurious to man. Soda, and every kind of mineral water, is injurious. They are all cold and unhealthy, whether artificial or from the springs. I have been at the springs in Saratoga and Ballstown, and drank the waters of each. They are cold, and contrary to nature, which is heat. Ice cream, ice punch,

and all such things are unhealthy. Those who make no use of them are the least gratified in taste, and most healthy.

### Crab's Eyes.

This is a fashionable medicine among the fashionables of this day of fashions which are passing away.

Dr. Thatcher, in his Dispensatory, page 167, gives the following account of "crab's eyes."

"In the head and stomach of the craw fish, are found certain concretions, about the size of peas, or larger, of a white color, and sometimes of a reddish or blueish cast. They are prepared by levigation and washing with water. The tips of the claws of the common crab are precisely similar in composition, and are prepared in the same manner. Both these substances are carbonate of lime, free from other earths, which chalk always contains, and therefore preferable to it for medicinal use."

From all this, what are crab's eyes? Something in the head and stomach of the craw fish, or the tips of the claws of the common crab, or chalk; which is considered the best of the three for medicine. When common people read, or hear of crab's eyes, they form an idea of a part of some animal, with which they see; but how are they surprised to find it means chalk! What a great difference is there between common sense, and learned sense! Common sense says, chalk—learned sense says, crab's eyes!!

### Thorn Apple—Apple Perue.

Dr. Thatcher says—"Every part of this plant is a strong narcotic poison, and numerous instances are recorded of children having suffered the most alarming consequences from having swallowed the seeds. Immediately after their being received into the stomach, dilatation of the pupils, vertigo, delirium, tremour, itching eruption, insupportable thirst, and palsy ensue; which if not remedied soon, terminate in death." Notwithstanding this account, Dr. T. describes it as good medicine; "They call evil good"; "but what will they do in the end thereof?"

### Singular method of killing flies.

A friend informs us, that being much trou-

bled with flies in his store, he made a strong tea of quassia wood, and sweetened it with molasses. The flies gathered around it on account of the sweetness. Soon after taking it, they would fall on their backs, and begin to whirl round, and so continue till they died. He supposed that the quassia as an astringent caused their death. Those who at this season are troubled with flies, may try the same with safety, and at a small expense, if they please.

*"Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician heal thyself."*

Luke iv, 23.

Why such a proverb as this nearly eighteen hundred years ago? We suppose that then as now, there were men called *Physicians*, who attended the sick as a trade, and not to cure. Men who could not cure others, and consequently could not heal themselves. We are told of one woman in the days of Christ who had suffered many things from many *physicians*, who had lost all her property, and was in a worse state when they had done, than at the beginning. To such, we suppose king *Asa* applied. He was blamed, because he sought not to the Lord, but to *physicians*. Physicians like those were in the days of Job, to whom he compared his friends, saying, "Ye are all physicians of no value."

These men when sick could not heal themselves. It appears this was a common saying among the people;—If you are what you profess to be, cure yourself, and in this way prove your skill in curing others whom you attend. There are some called *Doctors*, who cannot cure themselves, even when they are able to direct what to give, and how it must be given.

We sometimes hear such language as this from *Doctors*—"I never take much medicine, nor do I give much to my family. When they are sick I give them herb drink, which generally cures them. It is said that a doctor's wife applied to her husband for medicine for a sick child. He refused it, saying, I cannot spare medicine, I keep it to sell, give the child some herb drink, which is much better for it.

I once attended a widow woman whose husband was a doctor. She stated to me that when she was sick, he paid every attention to her, and administered his medicine freely, but when sick himself he would never take medi-

cine. She asked him why he gave it to her, and did not take it himself? He replied—"The reason I do not take it, is, I know what it is."

If the doctor does not take the medicine when sick which he gives to others in the same case, he gives others occasion to think that what he gives others, is not for a cure, but for gain. It is a critical situation for a doctor to be placed in, to be obliged to apply some other medicine to cure himself, than what he gives to others. The public will surely say, "*Physician heal thyself.*" In this way a man is in danger of being thrown out of business.

When a physician takes the same kind of medicine he gives others, and in this way heals himself, he not only proves himself honest in what he gives others, but he encourages others to take the same, being led to believe that the medicine which heals the physician, will heal those to whom he administers the kind he took himself.

### *Doctors' stories do not always agree.*

It is generally agreed, that when men ridicule any thing, they seek arguments or force to overthrow that which they treat with contempt. The *vegetable medicine* recommended in this paper, is by many respectable doctors acknowledged good, and some say they use a part of it themselves—others, either ignorant or something else, ridicule it, and represent it as unfit for human beings. How must a doctor appear to the candid, when saying—"Such medicine is good for horses"—or "it will kill nineteen out of twenty," &c.

It would be but a poor argument against good cheese, that rats love it, or good bread, that horses would eat it. The fact is, animals know the difference between medicine and poison, and it would be well for men if they would imitate the beasts in this thing. Who will say that catnip, or catmint, is bad, because the cat makes use of it for medicine? When a man endeavors in a dishonorable way to put another down, it is about certain that he is down himself, or sees a fall near at hand.

The description of *Lobelia* is unavoidably omitted, but will appear in our next.

### JUST PUBLISHED,

At No. 56, Middle-street, Boston, "The Minutes and Report of a Council, which was convened for the purpose of inquiring into the merits of a pamphlet, recently published in Boston, entitled, "A Statement of the Conduct of ELIAS SMITH toward Dr. Samuel Thompson."

The above Council consisted of the following members:

Hosea Ballou of Boston, Hosea Ballou of Roxbury, Sebastian Streeter of Portsmouth, N. H. Barzillai Streeter of Salem, Thomas Whittemore of Cambridge, Geo. Cannon, Esq. of Nantucket, Caleb Loring, Brooks Pratt, Joshua Emmons, and John Rand, of Boston.

The public, by reading this Report, will see the difference between truth, and an exertion to represent the innocent as guilty of crimes which never existed but in name. "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."

### EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT, PAGE 11.

"The greatest crime which seems to be urged in the pamphlet, against Mr. Smith, is, his having in the spring of 1821 'taken the whole lead of Dr. Thompson's business,' &c. The Council find it very difficult to account for this allegation being stated, for this was after Dr. Thompson had discontinued Mr. Smith's agency—of course, whatever business Mr. Smith did, it was his own business, and not Dr. Thompson's. But the Council can easily discover one important truth, which the compilers of the pamphlet did not seem to discover, viz. that Mr. Smith had made such improvements, by the dint of his own application and assiduity, as to be able to take the lead of this business, and to secure to himself the confidence of those who favored this mode of practice. If Mr. Smith has, by his strict application to the business, and by his ingenuity and address, brought this medicine and mode of practice into great repute, who, in justice, who, in moral right, ought to reap the fruits of his labors; labors for which he has suffered in many ways more than men in mercantile business suffer in procuring an independent fortune."

### Dysentery, Cholera Morbus, &c.

This is a season of the year, when these complaints are common among people, especially in the sea-port towns. At No. 56, may be had, *vegetable medicines*, which, if applied in the first stages of the disease, will effect a cure in a short time, as many in this city and the country around can testify.

No alteration in the diet is required, nor is the person in the least exposed to take cold, by using the medicine. Orders from the country for medicine to be used for the dysentery and *cholera morbus*, directed to *Elias Smith*, will be immediately obeyed.

The subscriber has *Vegetable Medicines* for lock-jaw, hydrophobia, fits, cramps, convulsions, spasms, &c. which, if applied in season, will not fail to effect a cure. E. S.

### SORE FEET.

Several people, by walking on the pavements in this hot season, complain of sore feet, and some of blistered feet. At No. 56, Middle-street, may be had, a medicine, for 25 cents, which, by bathing the feet with it a few times, night and morning, will entirely cure them, and prevent a return of the same difficulty. Tried and proved.